

# The Pileup

## Newsletter of the CDXA

**\*\*Final Results\*\***

**\*\*Final Results\*\***

### DX King 2020

By Art Tolda – W1AJT / VE3UTT

The CDXA DX King Competition for 2020 has come to an end. Despite poor band conditions, the lack of DXpeditions after February, the pandemic and many other problems facing us, the CQ DX Marathon, on which DX King is based, had its biggest year ever in 2020. Most of us stayed home and really appreciated the value of communication through amateur radio. Although there were 19 fewer countries available to work, the average country count was only down by 14 from 2019 for a maximum possible score of 313. Overall worldwide participation in CQ DX Marathon was up significantly along with the number of total QSOs, despite the average scores being lower due to the lack of DXpeditions. The CQ DX Marathon kept us busy concentrating on DX and was a great way to reduce stress from the pandemic.

Despite the overall increase in CQ DX Marathon participation worldwide there was only one additional CDXA participant this year for a total of 16 members out of 185 CDXA members or less than 10% of membership. However, this year there were 17 members reporting DX King scores in

AA4ZZ	Paul Trotter	President
N4HN	Thomas Wright	Vice-Pres.
N4APR	Ray Weeks	Sec./Treas.
K4MD	Joe Simpkins	Cluster Mgr.
W1AJT	Art Tolda	Contest Mgr.
W3GQ	Paul Sturpe	4th Call Area Bureau Mgr.
WB4BXW	Wayne Setzer	Webmaster
K8YC	John Scott	Editor

2020 with one member who either didn't file, misfiled, or filed with a different club.

CDXA did well as a whole. However, we did drop two places worldwide from 5<sup>th</sup> place in 2019 to 7<sup>th</sup> place in 2020. For the NA region, we went from 2<sup>nd</sup> place to 4<sup>th</sup> place after I had the Marathon judges count some misfiled scores—more about that later. CDXA was a whopping 466 points behind the 3<sup>rd</sup> place team and only 34 points ahead of the 5<sup>th</sup> place team.

Two members really did exceptionally well with our overall winner Ed (K5EK) ranking 10<sup>th</sup> worldwide and with Bruce (K4ZO) producing a stellar performance at 12<sup>th</sup> worldwide.

Speaking with the CQ DX Marathon organizer we discovered that there were four different club indicators submitted:

Carolina DX Association  
Caroliba DX association

CAROLINA DX ASSOCIATION  
CDXA

Only the first one is correct, please note this for 2021's submission. There is still a lot of time to get into the compe-

*(Continued on page 2)*

CDXA PacketCluster & Other Communication Systems	
K4MD (AR V.4 Cluster via Telnet)	k4md.no-ip.com:23
K4MD (AR V.6 Cluster via Telnet)	k4md.no-ip.com:7373
W4DXA (AR V.6 Cluster via Telnet)	w4dxa.no-ip.com:23
W3GQ (CC Cluster via Telnet)	w3gq.no-ip.com:7373
CDXA Repeater 147.18 MHz (+600 )	W4DXA, Near Fort Mill, SC
World Wide Web Homepage	www.cdxa.org
Wednesday Luncheon (11:30 AM)	Skyland Family Restaurant, 4544 South Boulevard, Charlotte, NC

(Continued from page 1)

tition for this year. IARU 2021 Contest alone could have provided DXCC in one weekend. Add to that the many other contests throughout the remainder of 2021, and increasing daily activity coming from improved propagation and you have the recipe for success—even if only to qualify for the DX King raffle.

Here are the final DX King scores:

Name	Callsign	2020 Score
Ed Kuebert	K5EK	284
Bruce Gragg	K4ZO	283
Dennis Motschenbacher	K7BV	272
Art Tolda	W1AJT	248
Martin Lafferty	W4PNY	245
William Axelrod	K3WA	244
Bob Burton	N4PQX	235
Art Tolda	VE3UTT	232
Paul Sturpe	W3GQ	224
Steve Sullivan	KZ2I	213
John Scott	K8YC	212
Gary Bader	KD4RH	206
Andrew Beary	W3DQS	196
Bill Parris	AA4R	190
Dick Williams	W3OA	178
Richard Shalayda	K4NWX	119

Last but not least, congratulations to Bob, N4PQX, who, for the second year in a row, is the winner of the \$100 Amazon Gift Card for the 2020 raffle competition.

## The Pileup

Official Newsletter of the Carolina DX Association  
Copyright 2021

Published bimonthly 6 times per year.

The purpose of the Association is to secure for the members the pleasures and benefits of associating with persons having a common interest in Amateur Radio.

Members of the CDXA shall adhere to "The Amateur's Code" as published from time to time in *The ARRL Handbook for Radio Amateurs*, and shall consist of those valid licensed amateur operators having an interest in promoting amateur radio. Long distance communications (DX) is of special interest to members of the Association, but said interest is not a requirement of membership.

Yearly dues are \$25.00. A second licensed Amateur family member living in the same household can join for \$5.00 for a total family price of \$30.00 per year. The total price for 3 or more licensed family members living in the same household is only \$35.00 per year. All family members enjoy full member status. Dues are payable annually in December by check to the Secretary/Treasurer:

Ray Weeks, N4APR  
3017 Cutchin Drive  
Charlotte, NC 28210

Address, telephone, and email address changes should be directed to the Secretary/Treasurer at the above address or via email at: [rweeks1@carolina.rr.com](mailto:rweeks1@carolina.rr.com).

## Welcome New Members

Shortly after our last newsletter was published **Thomas Nail, WA2BCK**, chose to join CDXA. Thomas lives on Hilton Head Island in South Carolina in grid square EM92. So, that may be a new grid square for those of you who are VHF aficionados! Welcome to CDXA, Thomas.

Also returning to the fold is **Tom Lewis, N4TL**, of Raleigh. Tom may have missed a renewal somehow because he'd been a member in 2019. That Covid-19 bugger sure messed a lot of things up in 2020!!

## What was going on. . . .

### Ten Years Ago:

A call was being put out for reservations for the 2011 edition of the CDXA BBQ to be held at Ken Boyd's home in Mint Hill. The SEVENTH meeting of SEDCO (before it was called W4DXCC) was being anticipated by CDXA members in September. SEDCO had earned its stripes as an event worthy of attendance. Dick Williams, W3OA, was receiving accolades by Pete Smith (N4ZR) of PVRC for Dick's innovative work in programming the Aggregator for the Reverse Beacon Network. This neat piece of computer code collects all the reports from all the reverse beacon locations so an operator can see where in the world his signal is being heard by visiting the RBN site.

### Twenty Years Ago:

The Pileup was on a memorabilia kick then. Bob Southworth (KI4YV) chimed in on how an old 279A tube pictured in the previous month's Pileup was used by the Army Signal Corp to "fry" a cat. . . . Top DXer Dave Kennedy (N4SU-SK) reminisced about the 304TL tubes he's still using in his WW II vintage home-brew amps . . . . The "Roving Reporter" visited the taciturn Dave Kennedy who, rather than speaking to the reporter, let his XYL Sonja's interview with QST in 1963 give a full recap of what life with Dave was like (in two parts, concluded the following month) . . . . High tensions were recently noted on Spratly Island and Scarborough Reef in the South China Sea as China, The Philippines and other countries in the region contested ownership of this island. (Nothing new there!)

### DX King—2021 Style

DX King for 2021 is in full swing. Results for 2020 are shown elsewhere in this issue. With improving propagation so far in 2021, the points already scored by CDXA participants in DX King appear to be ahead of last year's pace. There is still plenty of time to earn the required 150 points that will assure your name is "in the hat" for the raffle that is conducted for the 2021 competition.

Here are the results reported so far in 2021 with the July scores to be reported soon. Note that for a few participants, their most recent scores have not been reported. Perhaps there is a "sleeper" in there!!???

Callsign	Reporting Through	Class	Entities	Zones	Total
K5EK	June	Unlimited	225	40	265
K4ZO	June	Unlimited	214	40	254
K7BV	February	Unlimited	191	40	231
W4PNY	June	Unlimited	180	39	219
K3WA	June	Unlimited	179	40	219
W3GQ	June	Unlimited	178	40	218
KZ2I	May	Unlimited	172	40	212
W4HG	May	Unlimited	169	39	208
W1AJT	June	Unlimited	169	37	206
N4PQX	May	Unlimited	165	40	205
W7DO	June	Unlimited	163	39	202
K8YC	June	Unlimited	150	36	186
VE3UTT	June	Unlimited	139	39	178
AA4R	April	Limited	142	36	178
W3OA	March	Unlimited	111	30	141

Reminder: Report your scores every month, once you reach 100+ points. It is easily done via the on-line applet on the CDXA webpage. The contest manager updates the annual-to-date progress monthly under the "Contest Corner" tab on the CDXA website. Check there each month to track your progress.



## Silent Keys

By John Scott, K8YC

It is with great sadness when word comes to us that one of our former members has passed away. We have learned of the passing of two members since the last issue of the Pileup was published, although one of our losses occurred on July 22, 2020, and we have just learned of it.

### Olaf Madsen (KF4TP, SK)

December 03, 1930 - July 22, 2020



Olaf Jens Madsen, age 89, of Shelby NC passed away July 22, 2020. He was born December 3, 1930 to Adolf and Paula Madsen in Hamburg, Germany. It was in his youth during World War II that Olaf developed his life-long hobby/passion for Ham Radios alongside his dear friend, Gerd Schrick. Olaf immigrated to Montreal Canada in 1955 in search of opportunities where he met and married Elizabeth Ann (Lila) Stewart from Lisburn, Northern Ireland. Together they moved to Ohio and raised their family of 6 children, in Chesterland. Olaf worked for Clark Control and Reliance Electric Company as an engineer. He spent countless hours and most Sunday mornings in his "shack" on air WA8USP & KF4TP connecting with other ham radio enthusiasts all over the world, many of which remain his dearest and closest friends.

Olaf was a consummate "restorer" of old radios. He assisted a number of CDXA members with returning older radios to pristine condition. He often made the long drive from Shelby to attend lunches when they were being held at Murphy's on Woodlawn. I once spoke with Olaf about his experience as a youth in Germany. He had been sent to live in the country, but recalled vividly watching Allied B-17 bombers flying overhead on their way to bomb German cities late in the war. A haunting aspect of war was impressed on me when with quiet solemnity he noted, "... older men sit in the seat of government and send young men out to die." That this occurs on both sides of a conflict is a thought that should not ever be forgotten.

---o---O---o---

### Ed Benkis (W2HTI, SK)

September 22, 1930 – June 4, 2021



FRANKLIN – Edwin Benkis, born September 22, 1930, in Brooklyn, New York, was the son of Russian immigrants. His mother, Manya Benkis-Schmidt (Michael) was an accomplished concert pianist. Father Arvid Benkis, was a former soldier, vocalist, and pressman. Grandfather, Jacob Bermant (Celia), was a Brooklyn family doctor.

Edwin graduated from Peekskill High School, class of 1949. He received a Bachelor of Science in electrical engineering from The State University of New York. In 1951, Edwin obtained his amateur radio license, W2HTI, and was a charter member of NJDXA, established in 1957. Edwin was preceded in death by his wife Jean Cameron on December 20, 1974, and their son Andrew, on July 13, 2015.

Edwin passed from this life on June 4, 2021. Many in CDXA will remember W2HTI as "The Last Man Standing," at ham radio events for having the most number of worked entities. He is survived by his wife of 46 years, Eileen Morris-Leadbeater-Benkis. Eileen is also an accomplished licensed Ham, KO4DI.

## Hitting the High Spots

By John Scott, K8YC

For a number of years, I participated with the AA4ZZ VHF contest team as one of the operators working from the heights of the Blue Ridge of northern North Carolina as a fixed base station. We often worked stations who chose to “rove” from grid square to grid square. They would give their callsign with a “slash R” (/R) indicating that they were operating as a “Rover” station. Most rovers in the mountainous regions have a carefully selected set of locations in each grid which through experience are found to provide good line-of-sight paths to geographical areas that result in a lot of contacts.

Many of you know that former CDXA President Ted Goldthorpe (W4VHF, SK) had his own select set of four sites that helped him win CQWW VHF contest in the Rover class for a number of years. In fact, I think Ted shared those locations with a few CDXA members who made a point of asking him for them when Ted stopped doing his roving. (Note: Ted won the Rover Category of CQWW VHF for the years 2000 through 2005, and repeated the feat again in 2007!)

When I chose to be an operator who gave QSOs to AA4ZZ instead of operating from the contest station, I asked if I could help by doing a modicum of roving to some grids that were seldom worked during a contest weekend. As this year’s contest weekend neared, I learned that EM87, while somewhat close to AA4ZZ, was almost never a grid that appeared in the log of AA4ZZ. This story, then, is about what I came to learn are readily available useful tools to find some of those magical high spots from which to operate.

### Finding the “high spots”

If you’re lucky, perhaps you have a good buddy who has already searched out the best spots, and he’ll share their location with you. If not, then you may have to search various topographical maps which disclose elevations as contour lines. Many such maps can be found on the Internet. While not as convenient as looking at various sectional maps produced by the U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey, it is certainly less expensive than buying dozens of USCGS sectional maps. Yet, those USCGS maps ARE wonderful tools. One tool that actually identifies high spots is a website called <https://www.peakbagger.com/> which allows searching for high spots in a particular geographical area. Peakbagger also has reports from various visitors who have visited these peaks which can be of great assistance if you’re planning to operate from the actual summit. If you are a SOTA aficionado, Peakbagger may be your friend.

I was lucky that Roger Webb, W4MW, himself an ardent VHF operator/contester, told me that a mountain called Big A Mountain in the southeast corner of grid EM87 was a mountain that had good visibility from the AA4ZZ operating site. That seemed to be a good target.

### What will I find when I get there?

Once you have identified your targeted site, without going there, how might you find whether it will be a suitable operating site? Here, again, the tools of the Internet come to the rescue. Google Maps will let you zoom in to view almost every tiny curve in a road. But the real assistance is use of the “Street View” available in Google Maps which provides you a photo of the precise spot you intend to visit. Once there, Street View will allow you to have a 360 degree view of the site by “turning” the camera with your mouse! I was aware that if one went too far up the road at Big A Mountain, the view towards Boone would be obscured. With some careful searching, here is what I would see looking toward Boone from Big A: (when clicking on the following, you may need to navigate to the street view)

<https://www.google.com/maps/@37.0592825,-82.0272023,3a,75y,131.47h,93.18t/data=!3m6!1e1!3m4!1syhNwP2qmEgKiVUfOa-Mc7g!2e0!7i3328!8i1664>

What a view looking toward Boone!

*(Continued on page 6)*



*(Continued from page 5)*

Not far away from my ideal EM87 site, I found a site in EM88 that seemed to offer a similarly ideal view toward Boone. It was on a county road that ran on the southern side of a ridge. Here is what Street View showed as my best setup spot looking directly toward Boone: (when clicking on the following URL, you may need to navigate to the street view to see the photo looking toward Boone)

<https://www.google.com/maps/@36.9451969,-82.494419,3a,75y,93.29h,88.92t/data=!3m6!1e1!3m4!1s2oY8QoLBmtmmp6OhZtVWTw!2e0!7i3328!8i1664>

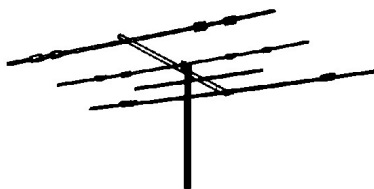
I had done the best that I could do to scout out my chosen sites. However, when I started up the county road toward the EM88 site, here is what I encountered . . . .



I ignored the sign figuring I had no intention of going “thru”. About two miles up the road after passing three major construction sites where only half the road existed--the downhill sides of the road had been totally washed out--I ran into some huge concrete barriers topped with chain link fencing. Clearly I was going no farther on this road on this day. Since approaching my chosen sight from the other end of the country road required a 30 mile drive to the entrance and considerable backtracking, my quest was over this day.

## Epilog

My XYL and I drove about 500 miles that day to fulfill our wish to help the AA4ZZ contest team. She did her part with the various setups and by also giving the team extra QSOs using her callsign, KG4QEN. By roving that day, we gave the team a number of QSOs and several multipliers. We ended the afternoon at the Martha Washington Inn in Abingdon, VA by enjoying a nice meal. And, a pleasant thing had happened while on Big A Mountain. We had parked just off the driveway of a home along the road and set up our antenna. A woman pulled into the driveway and stopped. She asked if we needed help with our car, and we explained we were competing in a radio contest. We thanked her for her offer and told her we would soon be gone. A few minutes after that, the homeowner came out of her house and said, “I’m about to put some hot dogs on the grill. Would you like some?” That made it all worthwhile, but we explained we were going on to our next stop, which you already know about!



## QSO Today Virtual Ham Expo Nears

By John Scott, K8YC

The third edition of the **QSO Today Virtual Ham Expo** is coming on August 14-15, 2021. The first edition was conducted last year about this time, and I felt it was an innovative way of conducting a “hamfest” without climbing into your car and walking an exhibition hall. Forums run continuously on several “tracks”, and did not have to be attended real time. In fact, the recorded forums were available for up to thirty days following the Expo for those who signed up for the Expo. As a trial product last year, admission was free, but there is a modest charge for the second and third editions to cover the costs of editing, formatting, saving and presenting the videos as streaming services and providing the interactive Q&A. Still, for a \$10 charge up to August 8<sup>th</sup>, (\$12.50 afterward), it is still an inexpensive way to partake in forums and getting informed about new products. Also, the videos can be viewed and reviewed as necessary.

Free admission to the virtual “exhibit area” is available, but you may have marketing messages from sponsors and exhibitors whose booths you visit during the Expo as I interpret the information on the expo website. Also, I am not sure you have interactive capabilities with the vendors as a non-paying customer. Paid registration holders may opt out of the marketing messages. Only the paid registrants can attend the forums, but think you’ll find it well worth the money spent.

Note: Videos of the first two Expos can be viewed on the webpage. Take a look.

Here is a link to the webpage of the Expo:

<https://www.qsotodayhamexpo.com/>

---

## What’s Inside. . . .

Results of CQ DX Marathon for 2020 have been reported and CDXA’s DX King has been named. See who the **DX King** is for 2020 on Page 1.

Meet our **newest members** on Page 2.

Check out the progress for **DX King for 2021** on Page 3. There’s still time for you to earn enough points to get in on the raffle open to all qualifying participants.

Two CDXA Members have become **Silent Keys** and are honored on Page 4.

Some ideas on finding that perfect spot for your next “**ROVER**” operation are discussed on Page 5.

The **QSO Today Virtual Ham Expo** is coming on August 14-15. Get your tickets before August 8 and save \$2.50. See commentary above, on this page.